

## Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) in Childcare and Schools

### What is RSV?

- A virus that's causes the common cold symptoms
- Most common in winter and early spring

### What are the symptoms?

- Runny nose, congestion, and cough for most children
- Very young infants can also show:
  - Irritability
  - Poor feeding
  - Turn blue with cough or brief periods of no breathing
- Wheezing and asthma attacks in children who already have asthma
- Children with weakened immune systems have a greater difficulty when sick with this virus
- Cough from RSV can last as long as 3 weeks

### How is RSV spread?

- Through contact with large droplets that form when a child talks, coughs, or sneezes
- These droplets can land on or be rubbed into the eyes, nose or mouth
- Contact with unclean objects (such as toys or desks) by children with RSV
- Can live on surfaces for many hours and 30 or more on your hands
- Before symptoms develop the virus can infect others

### How can you control it?

- Wash your hands often
- Teach children to cover their noses and mouths when sneezing or coughing with a tissue
- Clean commonly touched surfaces and toys more frequently during winter and early spring when outbreaks are expected

### Recommendations for Childcare Providers and Schools

- There is no reason to exclude children from group setting unless the child has a fever or unable to participate without compromising the health and safety of other children in the group
- RSV is very common in daycare settings
- RSV is a common cause of hospitalization among children less than 1 year and can be fatal
- Almost all children become ill at least once with RSV by 2 years of age and reinfection is common

